

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY GHOST:

SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS THE EXPERIENCE AND POWER OF THE
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY REV. S. CRUMP.



N the market-place of Heidelberg stands a church called "the Church of the Holy Ghost." There is nothing specially note-worthy about this church, saving that under its one roof both Romanists and Protestants are wont to worship. Its name, however, emphasizes a fact which perhaps is not sufficiently recognized, that the only true Church is the Church of the Holy Ghost. This does not affirm that the other persons of the mysterious Three have no relationship to the Church. It is the Church of the Father—God, the creation of his grace, the kingdom of his power. Of this Church he gave Christ to be the Head during the mediatorial dispensation, and at its close Christ shall surrender it to the Father, that he may be all in all. The Church also is most emphatically the Church of Christ. He has loved it, purchased it with his own blood. It is *his* body: he is *its* soul. The Church is his bride, living in his fellowship and joy. She lives for him, and he lives for her, ever interceding for her until she reigns with him in his everlasting kingdom and glory. Nevertheless, the Church is rightly designated when it is called "the Church of the Holy Ghost." It is the Holy Spirit who illumines, convinces, regenerates, inhabits, sanctifies Christian believers. They live and walk in the Spirit. He is their life, their joy, their purity. The Church, indeed, is the Church of the Father and of the Son, so far only as it exists in and is possessed by the Spirit.

To this fact bear witness all the Scriptures and all Church history, and especially the memorable scenes of the day of Pentecost. They testify that only by the all-brooding energy of the Spirit is this body of Christ formed; that only by his purifying and glorifying grace is she made meet to be the bride of the Lamb, and to be decked with the glory of God. Paul's conversion was a *pattern* of what Jesus Christ could do when "he showed forth all long-suffering"—"a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting;" and who does not feel thankful for so glorious a specimen of the omnipotent grace of Christ? So the first church at Jerusalem was a *pattern* of what the Holy Ghost can do when he sheds forth all the fulness of his love—a pattern to all succeeding churches who should hereafter be quickened and renewed by his grace. Let us carefully ponder its experience and power, and mark how it is an example to us. In doing this its miraculous characteristics will be subordinate, and its great spiritual features will come up into that bold relief which must ever fascinate the eyes of all interested in the attainment and diffusion of Christian Holiness.

"The number of names together" on the roll of the primitive Church, including men and women, "were about one hundred and twenty." Amongst them were "the women" honorably distinguished as devoted followers of the Lord, loving attendants upon his person, and tender ministers of his wants. Prominent amongst these women was Mary, Jesus' mother, often painfully tried, and at last transfixed with the killing sword of Jesu's death, but whose unfaltering love prompted her to stand by his cross to catch his dying blessing, and yet sustained her after his ascension, in the hope of receiving still larger